

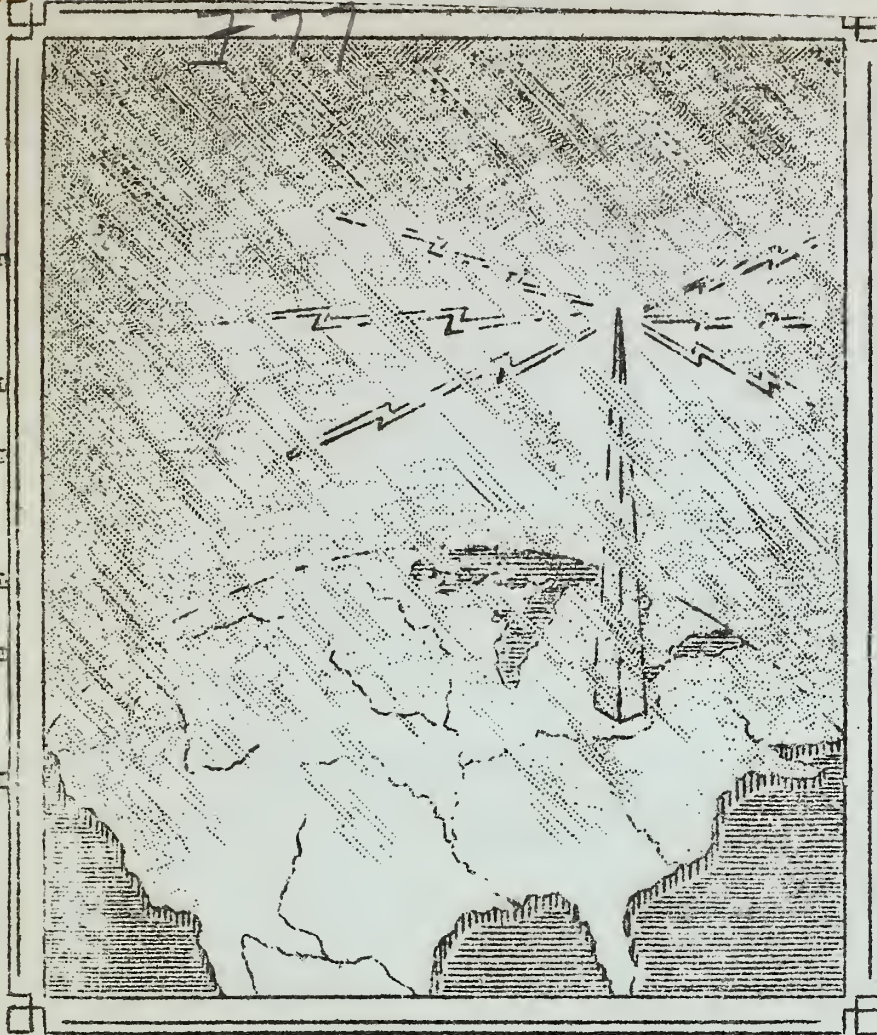
## **Historic, Archive Document**

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AUG 2 1940



FORTUNES

WASHED

AWAY

"FIGHTERS FROM MONROE"

Broadcast No. 13 in the third year  
in a series of dramatizations  
of better land use

WLW, Cincinnati

July 20, 1940

1:15-1:30 p.m.

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Soil Conservation Service  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D. C.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
DAYTON, OHIO

1990

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[illegible]



SOUND: Thunder and rain...

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

Monroe County, Michigan, still grows the old French pear trees brought by cuttings from Lombardy by the first settlers in this historic River Raisin country. Kind-hearted, religious, but none too industrious were those first settlers, who cleared their lands and staked their claims when and if their trapping and fishing permitted. Monroe County is famed for its tree nurseries, its quaint, queer-shaped farms, its limestone quarries, its alfalfa production, its fighters. Here are true stories of two fighters in different fields, one man fighting to claim this land of ours, the other fighting to preserve it.

ORGAN: BY THE WATERS OF MINNETONKA.

ANNOUNCER

The first story is of an Indian fighter, General George Armstrong Custer, born at New Rumley, Ohio, but long a resident of Monroe County, Michigan. His wife, Elizabeth Bacon, followed him faithfully on many long campaigns, but much of her information came from his letters. For instance...

ELIZABETH (reading)

And so now we are encamped in the Indian Territory, after a long march. We have marched over much peculiar country, once we had to dig down into the dry bed of a stream to get water. At another point we found the banks of a stream miry, and we had to corduroy it. It took four hours to cross twenty wagons. The timber is thick, the grass poor. But we must fight to gain this land, because our country needs it. Remember that, my dear Libbie...we need our land. But I should tell you what happened today...(fade)

SOUND: Occasional, but not frequent, rattling of dishes...

HENRY

Ginnel, it's gonna take a powerful heap of time to fix this dinner.

CUSTER

What's the trouble, Henry?

HENRY

Well, suh, the water don't naturally seem to want to boil. I reckon I know why they call this here river the Cimarron.

CUSTER

Oh? And why?

HENRY

Ah jest cooks and cooks these beans, but the water it don't boil. It just naturally seems to "simmer on."

CUSTER (laughing)

All I can say is, Henry, you'd better hurry. Major Eliot and I are hungry for one of those buffalo steaks. Eh, Major?

ELIOT

Oh, I beg pardon, General. What did you say? I was studying these maps, and I...

CUSTER

I was just telling Henry what a nice shot I made when I killed that buffalo this morning.

ELIOT

Quite true...you did make a good shot. But it was my shot that brought down the buffalo. Yours, General, was, shall we say... blown astray by the wind?

CUSTER

The argument begins again! Never mind. We will have another opportunity to settle this. There should be plenty of game ahead.

ELIOT

And plenty of Indians. We'll have to fight every inch of the way, because they don't seem a bit disposed to give up their land.

CUSTER

The whole campaign has been horribly bungled, at least in some respects. These Indians are really good-natured, but they've been tricked, and swindled, and it's no wonder they're bitter at us. And you can't blame them for wanting to keep their land.

ELIOT

They do treat it well. Note their moving villages. As soon as the grass in a valley is exhausted by the ponies, everything is packed, and the village is moved, so that the grass may recover.

CUSTER

And our "civilized" white men are moving...but for a different reason. They stay on a farm until it is so washed and gullied it must be abandoned, then they move west. And we, the soldiers, must lead the way, pushing toward our last frontier.

ELIOT

The beautiful hills of the South can tell that story.

CUSTER

Yes, a story of man's greed, destroying our garden spots in a frenzied effort to get every penny out of the soil. The gray hills of Georgia and the Carolinas are turning red...and the men move west. And we lead the way, Major...toward the last frontier.

ORGAN: BY THE WATERS OF MINNETONKA.



ELIZABETH (reading)

The dogs have gone beyond my highest expectations. Three days ago Maida alone ran down a jack-rabbit and killed it, and they are the fleetest animals we have, except the antelope. Yesterday while looking for camp, accompanied by a few scouts and headquarters men, we jumped a prairie-fox. But you should have seen Henry when we told him we expected to meet the Indians soon...(fade)

ELIOT

General Custer, a courier has just brought this letter.

CUSTER

Thank you, Major. Hmm...from Wild Bill Hickok.

SOUND: LETTER RIPPED OPEN...

ELIOT

Wild Bill and California Sam have been a big help to us.

CUSTER

Wonderful help. Why, Bill says the Osages are being very friendly. The rivers are causing trouble, though...swollen and filled with mud. Some of them so muddy that a tadpole couldn't live in them.

ELIOT

That's Kansas for you. Whatever Kansas does, it does with a rush. The lightning is more terrific than lightning elsewhere, the rain pours down in floods, the wind blows hurricanes. And I'm not so sure about those Indians, either.

HENRY (fading in)

Ginnel, suh, did ah hear you say sompin' about Injens?

CUSTER

Yes, Henry, are you ready to meet them?

HENRY

No, suh, Ah definitely is not. Ah still remember the last passel we met.



ELIOT

Why, Henry, they didn't hurt you. They were captives.

HENRY

Ah know, Major, suh...but jest the same, Ah didn't want no fooling with 'em. The ginnel asked me didn't ah want to see Ingins. You know, Ah had never saw one afo'. Ah went in the big gate with the ginnel. Ginnel told 'em who Ah was, and they called me black chief. They never had seed a colo'd person afo'. They felt of me, rolled up my sleeve to see if Ah was brown under my shirt. (LAUGHING)  
Ah sho' was. But ah was kinda white under the collar.

CUSTER (laughing)

Never mind, Henry, you'll get used to the west. It's a great country, this land of ours.

ELIOT

And a queer one. I was just thinking...you know that the law requires that our national cruisers shall be named after cities.

CUSTER

Yes...

ELIOT

I wonder if such towns as You Bet, Red Dog, Hang Town, and Jackass Gap will answer the purpose.

CUSTER (clearing his throat, and with mock seriousness)

Major Eliot, you will kindly attend to your duties.

ORGAN: HOME ON THE RANGE.

ELIZABETH (reading)

We had a flood on Big Creek. Henry told us the water "had been on the rise right smart of time already." The sky darkened, and the shriek and whistle of the keen wind came over the prairie, and twisted the leaves and branches of our few protecting trees, cracking the dry twigs and breaking the exposed branches. With the roar of the storm came big drops of rain and great clouds of dust. Then, as suddenly as it had departed, came the sunshine...

CUSTER

Henry, did you see to the horses?

HENRY

Yassuh, Ginne! they's the first thing ah looked after. They's alright. But please, suh, don't you say dinner to me!

CUSTER

No?

HENRY

No suh, they ain't a dry sliver of wood on the whole prairie. Ah'm ready to go back to Virginny.

CUSTER

Don't you like the West?

HENRY

Ah likes it littler and littler more and more. Ginne! you got your friends, but Ah hain't got nobody. There ain't no picnics or church sociables or buryings out here. Nothing but land, land, and more land.

CUSTER

You don't realize it, Henry, but we need this land. This army is more than just a roving band of soldiers, fighting the Indians just to be fighting. We have millions of people in America. We used to think we had plenty of land...that it was inexhaustible. We can see land as far as the horizon...and beyond. But I can see into the future, too...and I can see the day when we will reach the last frontier.

SOUND: Tom-toms beating softly behind following...

ELIZABETH

That was the last letter I received from my husband, General George Armstrong Custer. You know the rest. The war-drum throbs no longer, and the battle flags are furled. He heard no volley fired at his grave, no muffled sound of drum. But he sleeps under a shower of blossoms which the apple-tree scatters with each breath of the summer wind.

SOUND: Tom-toms softly die, then pause, and

ORGAN: SHORT CHORD AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of General George A. Custer, a fighter from Monroe County, Michigan. And now, for the story of another fighter, we turn once again to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is Hal Jenkins.



JENKINS

Thanks, \_\_\_\_\_. But don't get me wrong...I'm not the fighter. This is a story about Euen Morris, who has farmed for many, many years along the River Raisin in Monroe County...right along the North Custer road. His fight was against soil erosion, even on gently sloping land, and his chief weapon was alfalfa. He was the first man in the county to grow alfalfa, and remember that Michigan is one of the leading states in the production of this valuable legume. L. D. Eagles, an agronomist of the Soil Conservation Service here in the Ohio Valley is an authority on alfalfa, so I'm going to ask him to tell us about it...and about Euen Morris in particular.

EAGLES

Well, Hal, I'll tell you now what's a fact, it's too bad we couldn't get Ward Andrews, the county agricultural agent in Monroe County, to do it, because he knows the story by heart...but I'll do the best I can. You said that Euen Morris was the first to grow alfalfa in that county...maybe you'd like to know how he got the idea.

JENKINS

Yes, I'm sure we all would.

EAGLES

It was a long time ago. His grandfather had settled that land... one of the old French claims, and his father, J. W. Morris, was operating it at the time. One day he asked his father if he couldn't buy a Holstein cow and a calf. He kept after him, and finally got permission. He decided that he would show his father that "he didn't make a fool move," as he puts it, and he was right. In four months, he received \$44 in milk checks, selling his milk to a nearby cheese factory.

JENKINS

Why all this talk about cows and milk? Where does the alfalfa business come in?

EAGLES

Right here and now. Mr. Morris was a great reader of bulletins and farm journals. One day he...

JENKINS

Now, "Buzz"...don't tell me he had been reading that pasture bulletin, "Saving Soil With Sod."

EAGLES

You know as well as I do, Hal, that "Saving Soil With Sod" is a brand new bulletin, written especially for farmers in Michigan and neighboring states of the Ohio Valley. This was a long time ago, when Mr. Morris read about alfalfa, or "lucerne" as it was called then, in a dairy farm journal. So he decided to try it. He's tried it ever since.

JENKINS

What had he been feeding his cattle before?

EAGLES

Mainly ensilage, timothy and clover mixed. And by the way, he was the first man in the county to own a silo, so you can see he really is a progressive farmer. But getting back to alfalfa, he started growing it in a mixture with timothy, and that's one soil conservation practice that still holds good. You see, alfalfa alone, even though a legume, doesn't form too good a sod on sloping land, but mixed with timothy, or smooth brome grass, it's about as fine a meadow as you can ask for.

JENKINS

Yes, I know that much. I read about it in that bulletin, "Saving Soil With Sod." And "Buzz", I know you'll pardon the interruption... because I want to tell our farm friends that if they would like a copy of the illustrated pasture and meadow bulletin, "Saving Soil With Sod," just send a letter or a penny post card to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio. It has plenty of information about alfalfa in it, too. But while they're waiting for the bulletin, how about information about alfalfa from you, L. D.?

EAGLES

Well, alfalfa is rapidly becoming a major crop in this region. It has been especially evident during the past few years of deficient rainfall, when yields of grass and red clover crops have been relatively low. In other words, it has proved to be good insurance against dry weather. On farms where dairying is important, alfalfa has been valuable in supplying an abundance of legume hay and pasture. The feeding of alfalfa has also reduced the necessity of buying as much commercial protein feed. As to the various strains, there are a lot of them...in Michigan we found Hardigan, Grimm, and Le Beau to be the most hardy. By the way, Hal, that Le Beau strain also originated in Monroe County.

JENKINS

Oh, Le Beau! So the Frenchmen come in again!



EAGLES

Yes. A Frenchman up there must have been working with it just about the time Euen Morris first began experimenting with alfalfa. But there is so much to be said about alfalfa, especially from a soil conservation standpoint, that I'd like to suggest that any farmer interested get in touch with his county agricultural agent, and talk things over. I think you'll find alfalfa an excellent soil-saver, as well as a dependable forage crop.

JENKINS

I know that thousands of farmers who have had experience with this legume will agree with you, and thanks a lot, L. D. Eagles, agronomist of the Soil Conservation Service.

SOUND: TELEGRAPH KEY CLICKING

ANNOUNCER

News in the conservation world!

JENKINS

From Michigan we leap to Tennessee and here's more timely news about alfalfa. Tennessee farmers are in the middle of another cover crops campaign. Their acreage planted to this crop has more than doubled during the last six years. Alfalfa not only makes fine hay and pasture but when grown with grass it is one of the most effective crops that can be grown to prevent water run-off and soil erosion. Alfalfa builds the soil, it makes palatable and nutritious hay which can be fed to livestock in fall and winter and spring when farm animals should not be trampling and damaging permanent pasture land. As a pasture crop, alfalfa has saved many livestock farms during periods of extreme drought. So hats off and more power to Tennessee's annual cover crops campaign.

SOUND: Boom of cannon.

ANNOUNCER

This week, we salute!

JENKINS

Wolfe County, Kentucky, where 800 tons of superphosphate--an all-time high--has been ordered by farmers. That should help to establish alfalfa meadows and thicken the cover on Wolfe County pastures...and save a heap of erosion. Our thanks to C. A. Lewis, Kentucky agricultural extension editor, for this bit of news.

SOUND: Boom of cannon.

ANNOUNCER

And now we salute!

JENKINS

The farmers of America...who last month ordered more than three hundred thousand tons of liming materials to sweeten their sour and eroding lands. This brings the total orders for liming materials this year to approximately two million tons, under the A.A.A. grant of aid program. And that much limestone will do a lot toward establishing newly-seeded alfalfa next month. It will do a lot toward stopping soil erosion in the meadows and pastures all over this land of ours.

SOUND: Bawling of a cow mingled with the bleating of sheep. Rain pattering dismally down, or whine of winter wind, behind:

FARMER (crying hysterically)

Oh, I'm to blame. It's all my fault. My cattle are starving.

(Cries) It's my fault, oh...

WOMAN (approaching from off mike)

Jim! Jim, what is it? Speak to me, Jim! Are you hurt?

FARMER (sobbing)

I'm all right, Clara. I'm all right...but my cows...my sheep.....

WOMAN

What's the matter with them?

FARMER

They're hungry, Clara, listen to them! And I don't have any hay for them...we didn't raise enough last year.

WOMAN (disgustedly)

Jim Slocum, quit your blubbering! I know what to do. Next year we'll raise a lot of alfalfa just like it says in that bulletin, "Saving Soil With Sod." I just heard Hal Jenkins on the radio. He said: "If you would like a copy of the bulletin, 'Saving Soil With Sod,' just drop a letter or a penny postcard to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio.

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS, up then low, whole:

JENKINS

This is Hal Jenkins saying goodbye and inviting you to be listening at this same time next week for another story of "Fortunes Washed Away."

UP ON ORGAN THEME.

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